

National Infant Immunization Week April 22-29, 2006

Love them. Protect them. Immunize them.

Working together with Vaccination Week in the Americas

Vaccination: an act of love



PRESS RELEASE

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National Infant Immunization Week Urges Parents to Vaccinate On Time

More Than Twenty Percent of Children Not Fully Protected Against Vaccine-Preventable Disease

The U. S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) will launch National Infant Immunization Week (NIIW), April 22-29th, with a message that focuses upon improving the number of young children who are immunized.

Every day, 11,000 babies are born in the United States who will need to be immunized against 13 diseases before age two. Despite recent gains in infant immunization coverage, more than 20 percent of the nation's two-year-olds do not get fully immunized against infectious diseases to which they are especially vulnerable.

"A substantial number of children in the United States still aren't adequately protected from vaccine-preventable diseases," said Dr. Anne Schuchat, director of the National Immunization Program at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. "The suffering or death of even one individual from a vaccine-preventable disease is an unnecessary human tragedy. Let us renew our efforts to ensure that no child, adolescent or adult will have to needlessly suffer from a vaccine-preventable disease."

For the third year, CDC will partner with the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), the United States-Mexico Border Health Commission (USMBHC) and more than 35 other nations for Vaccination Week in the Americas (VWA) in order to reach out to parents, caregivers, health care providers, and communities throughout the Western Hemisphere to highlight the need for routine infant vaccinations.

More than 500 NIIW events are expected to take place across the United States to promote infant vaccinations. Events will reflect this year's NIIW theme "*Love them. Protect them. Immunize them.*"

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Spanish-language public service announcements (PSA) for radio and television have been produced under this year's campaign theme, "Keeping the Promise." The 1960s hit song "Sunshine, Lollipops and Rainbows" will be the theme song used for the Spanish-language television and radio PSAs. Oscar- and Grammy-winning composer Marvin Hamlisch provided the rights to adapt the lyrics into Spanish and his music to a Latin flair. In addition HHS and CDC will be redistributing an English-language PSA entitled "I Promise" featuring parents and grandparents promising to vaccinate their children on time, every time.

The PSAs, set to begin airing during NIIW, will be sent to major markets throughout the United States and are intended to be broadcast through April 2007.

The Department of Health and Human Services' mission is to protect health and give a special helping hand to those who need assistance. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention protects people's health and safety by preventing and controlling diseases and injuries; enhances health decisions by providing creditable information on critical health issues; and promotes healthy living through strong partnerships with local, national, and international organizations. For more information please visit www.cdc.gov/nip or call 1- 800-CDC-INFO (800-232-4636).

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